

23 March 1951

SUBJECT: SIE-1: TERMS OF REFERENCE: CURRENT ACTIVITIES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE FAR EAST

THE PROBLEM

To examine the scope and nature of Soviet and Satellite activities during the past three months and to estimate the probable purposes of such activities with particular reference to the Far East.

QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. What Soviet activities have taken place in the Far East during the past three months, and where have these been most pronounced?

A. MILITARY (GROUND)

1. U.S.S.R.

a. Changes in Strength, Organization or Composition:

No change has been noted in the over-all strength of the Soviet Army in the Far East. This strength since 1947 is estimated to be 381,000 men.

Personnel strength of units has remained at normal peace-time levels, which are estimated to be 70% of war-time strength. However, the assumption that all units are at 70% of the war-time strength can neither be substantiated nor denied.

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There is no evidence of change in the organization of Soviet Army units in the Far East since June 1948. At that time, the 126th Mountain Corps was raised to army status (army as yet unidentified). At the same time, several brigades are believed to have been expanded into divisions.

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Since the Korean war, the numbers of Soviet military and civilian advisers to both the Chinese Communist and the North Korean forces have increased. The present minimum estimate of these Soviet Army advisers is 10,000 with the Chinese Communist forces and 2,000 with the Korean. Some civilians are included therein.

b. Changes in Training:

No significant changes in training of Soviet Ground Forces have been noted during the past three months.

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have been no indications of special training since then.

c. Changes in Equipment:

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the evidence does not suggest that this is a new development.

d. Changes in Morale:

None noted.

e. Changes in Leadership:

No significant changes noted.

f. Changes in Logistical Support:

Soviet ground transportation in the Far East is being improved. In January 1951, it was learned that three new rail lines were under construction: one probably from Sovetskaya Gavan through DeKastri and Cape Lazareva to Nikolaevsk, a second on Sakhalin from Pogibi through Alexandrovsk to Pobedino, and a third from Vladivostok

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to Kraskino providing a direct route to North Korea. A preliminary survey from a railroad on Kamchatka connecting Ust Bolsheretsk with Petropavlovsk was in progress in August 1950. Foreign sources report a railroad improvement program in North China, with Soviet advisers, has been in progress since 1949; it called for accomplishment within five years of the following: completion of Tatung-Tangku line; construction of double-track railroad Mukden-Tientsin; completion of the Paotow-Lanchow line, via Ningsia, and of the Tientsin-Lanchow line. It is not known whether this plan for improvement of railroads in North China is still being carried out.

A Sakhalin-Komsomolsk oil pipeline is reported under construction and may be completed by late 1951. Completion of this pipeline will enable the refineries at Komsomolsk and Khabarovsk to operate throughout the year and provide in part the Forces of the Far East with POL; normally, the refineries operate only from the middle of May to the end of October. This year, exceptionally, the Khabarovsk refinery has continued operations at least through January, using crude oil shipped from the west.

In February 1951, the refinery at Dzenzi (Komsomolsk) was expanding production facilities to include jet fuel, which was not previously known to be manufactured in the Far East.

There are indications that the strategic stockpiling program under the Ministry of State Food and Material Reserves and Ministry of War has increased significantly in the Far East during recent months. This program is both an economic necessity and a means to increase Russia's ability to conduct a war in this area. Evidence during the last three months has shown a build-up in the Irkutsk area, and raw materials there are being removed for processing; the storage space made available is being used for finished products. This appears to be a natural step in the State Reserve program.

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There are indications of a steady increase in heavy industry in Irkutsk and the area immediately west thereof; a synthetic rubber plant at Tulun is now under construction. Industrial development in this area seems aimed at decreasing Eastern Siberia's logistic dependence on the west.

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g. Changes in Deployment:

None noted.

h. Changes in Soviet Facilities:

None noted.

2. NORTH KOREA

a. Changes in Strength, Organization or Composition:

Following the apparent disintegration of the North Korean People's Army in October 1950, rapid reconstruction and reorganization of salvaged elements were instituted and, by early December, six North Korean corps had been identified in addition to the original two, making a total of eight. Also since November 1950, the number of identified North Korean divisions increased from 14 to 29. There is evidence that the authorized strength of the reorganized divisions is slightly less than the earlier divisions, the strength having been reduced from an estimated 10,970 to 9,500. There are also indications that the T/O&E of several of the reorganized divisions provided for organic antiaircraft battalions. This is a development in line with the Soviet practice of having an antiaircraft battalion organic to each division.

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b. Changes in Training:

Three of the new North Korean People's Army corps, the VI, VII and VIII, are known to have been organized and trained in Manchuria. There are no indications that their training was along any special lines. It is also known that a large number of overage (35-37 year old's) individuals were removed from the corps during their training period.

c. Changes in Equipment:

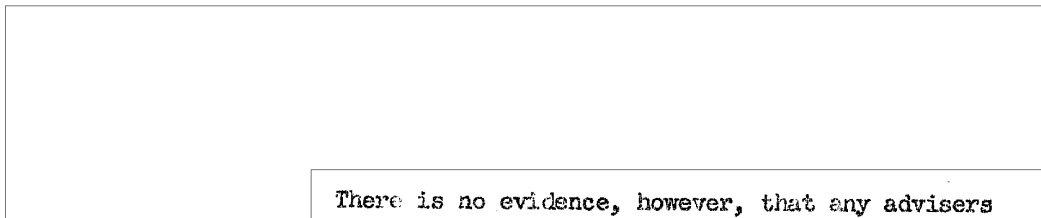
No information is available to confirm any significant changes in North Korean equipment. In fact, there are indications of a shortage of heavy equipment.

d. Changes in Morale:

During the last three months, several reports indicate poor morale in the combat units as a result of food shortages.

e. Changes in Leadership:

In addition to Korean leaders, there is evidence that



There is no evidence, however, that any advisers have a direct command function.

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f. Changes in Logistical Support:

There are indications that supplies in quantity are being received by the North Korean People's Army through Manchouli, Manchuria.

In early February, over 538 Soviet-type vehicles had been distributed to Korean corps in Manchuria. There are indications that the three corps which were trained in Manchuria received supplies, especially artillery and ammunition, in such amounts that a surplus would be available for shipment to units in Korea. The North Korean People's Army maintains a special committee in Manchuria known as the Committee for Receiving Military Goods from the Northeast. There is evidence that most Korean logistical support comes from the Soviets and/or Chinese.

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g. Changes in Deployment:

In early December, two North Korean corps, the I and IV, and possibly one other -- the II -- were actually committed against UN forces. Three corps -- the VI, VII and VIII -- were training in Manchuria. Locations and activities of the others -- the III and V Corps -- were unknown.

All identified major units are presently deployed in Korea. Since January, the I, II, III and V Corps have been in contact with UN forces. During February and early March, the VI, VII and VIII Corps, well equipped, well trained and at full T/O strength, moved from Manchuria to positions in Korea, although the VIII Corps has possibly undergone some decimation as result of UN interdiction. Elements of these corps are currently being committed to combat.

3. CHINA

a. Changes in Strength, Organization or Composition:

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b. Changes in Training:

There is no information to confirm any significant changes in the training of Chinese Communist forces; however, unconfirmed reports indicate that some elements of the Chinese Communist field forces are undergoing training in Manchuria in anticipation of receiving heavy equipment from the Soviets.

c. Changes in Equipment:

There is no firm evidence of significant changes in Chinese Communist equipment to date.

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d. Changes in Morale:

PW interrogations during the past three months indicate a perceptible lowering of morale among Chinese Communist combat units as a result of food shortages, high casualty rate and severe weather conditions in Korea. The general state of discipline, however, remains effective.

e. Changes in Leadership:

No significant changes noted.

f. Changes in Logistical Support:

No changes noted.

g. Changes in Deployment:

On 18 Mar 51, it was noted that units of the CCF 4th Field Army were all withdrawing north. Whether they are leaving Korea, or whether they are retiring to more northerly defensive positions remains to be seen. Units of the 1st Field Army were moved into Korea as replacements or reinforcements. Indications that 1st Field Army elements were moving from northwest China into the North China area were noted in January 1951. Good evidence indicates that elements of two armies of the 2d Field Army have moved or are presently being moved from southwest China to North China.

4. CHINA-TIBET

Evidence in late December and early January disclosed that Chungking had ordered 20,000 fur hats for Chinese Communist forces going into Tibet. Peking promised delivery by the end of May 1951.

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These items would provide protection against snow glare and colds (Note: Gauze masks covering the mouth and nose are widely used in the Orient to prevent cold infection).

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5. INDO-CHINA

a. Changes in Strength, Organization or Composition:

Since mid-1950, the Viet Minh forces have been going through what appears to be a continuous build-up into higher echelon combat units. This reorganization has taken effect primarily in Tonkin, where five divisional-type units have been identified.

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Elsewhere, the Viet Minh Army is still organized into independent regiments and battalions, and it is believed that the Viet Minh will attempt to combine these units into divisions as personnel and equipment become available.

Information suggests additionally that two corps are in process of formation in Tonkin.

b. Changes in Training:

This information confirms estimates that Chinese Communist military and political training and advisory personnel are with the Viet Minh.

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c. Changes in Equipment:

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d. Changes in Morale:

None noted.

e. Changes in Leadership:

None noted.

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f. Changes in Logistical Support:

There was a temporary lull in the rearmament program during December 1950, but supply of materiel to the Viet Minh has been resumed. In addition, movement of supplies from Hainan to the Viet Minh areas of the Annam coast is believed to be of some significance, particularly in terms of supplementing land supply of equipment to units in Annam.

g. Changes in Deployment:

There is evidence that virtually all major Viet Minh units in Tonkin have recently been in movement, deploying close to the French perimeter in preparation for another major attack.

h. Development of Facilities:

None noted.

6. BURMA

Recent information strongly suggests that the Burma Communist Party is not only attempting to unite the several dissident groups under a "united front" dominated by them, but also that active Chinese Communist military support may have started, or at least is imminent. The program of Chinese Communist aid is certain to be extremely modest at the outset, and no spectacular successes against Burmese Government troops are expected in the near future.

II. To what extent have these changes affected Soviet and Chinese Capabilities?

A. OFFENSIVELY AGAINST:

1. UNITED NATIONS FORCES IN KOREA

a. U.S.S.R.

These changes have not affected Soviet capabilities against United Nations forces in Korea significantly.

b. Communist China:

The increase in Soviet stockpiling noted in recent months has increased the potential Soviet logistical support which may be made available to the Chinese Communists.

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2. UNITED STATES FORCES IN JAPAN, RYUKYU ISLANDS, ALASKA
AND THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

a. U.S.S.R.:

There has been no significant change in Soviet capabilities against these areas.

b. Communist China:

To date, this threat has been limited in part by the apparent scale of the Soviet logistical and technical support provided to the Chinese Communists. Such support can, however, be increased and may perhaps be increasing.

3. TAIWAN AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

a. U.S.S.R.:

These changes have not affected Soviet capabilities against Southeast Asia and Taiwan.

b. Communist China:

As a result of Soviet support made available by the Soviets, the Chinese Communist Army may be developing an improved capability for an attack against Taiwan and perhaps Southeast Asia.

B. DEFENSIVELY

Defensively, Soviet military and economic activities throughout the Soviet Far East have, ever since World War II, been directed at securing the independence of that area from the western U.S.S.R. in terms of both offensive and defensive capabilities. Recent changes in this area reflect only a continuing build-up of these capabilities. The increased rate of the activity indicates a growing Soviet concern for the vulnerability of the area, and probably indicates that the priority requirements of the western U.S.S.R. have been substantially attained. From the recent changes, it may be concluded that the Soviets have made considerable progress at reducing the strategic vulnerability of the Far Eastern U.S.S.R. through stockpiling and reduced dependence upon the line of communication into the area.

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III. Have there been any comparable Soviet and/or Satellite military, political or economic developments elsewhere which might indicate Soviet intentions, particularly in the Far East?

During the past year, and particularly since mid-1950, there has been a sharp increase in the extent and nature of Soviet support provided to the Eastern European Satellites. The previous Soviet policy of providing largely war-worn, obsolete or obsolescent equipment to their Satellites has shifted markedly to a program of providing new and modern equipment in increasing quantities. During the past year, intensive training programs have been accomplished. Satellite armies have been expanded and reorganized in conformance to the pattern of Soviet units. As a result of these developments, these Satellite armies as a group have become capable of offensive combat operations. This, in itself, may be an indication of Soviet intentions to use these Satellite armies for offensive purposes. The provision of Soviet logistical support and technical advisers to the Chinese Communist Army may have the same objective in the Far East.

If a comparison may be made between the developments within the Eastern European Satellite armies, and the development to be expected in the Chinese Communist Army, it is that the added logistical and technical support now being provided to the Chinese Communists is intended to convert them into a large land force with modern technical equipment capable of sustained offensive warfare in the Far East without overt Soviet combat support.

IV. What is the probable purpose of all of these developments?

A. GROUND FORCE POINT OF VIEW:

1. U.S.S.R.

The developments noted in the Far East probably have the purpose of making the Soviet Far East logistically and militarily self-sustaining.

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2. CHINA

The extent and nature of Soviet support that has been provided to the Chinese Communists may, if it is continued on the same or an increasing scale, have one or both of the following objectives:

- a. The development of a Chinese Army capable of supporting the Communist drive toward world domination by independent acts of aggression in the Far East.
- b. The development of Chinese Communist armies capable of augmenting the Soviet Army in a global war.

3. INDO-CHINA

Probably the most significant purpose of these developments is to improve the over-all combat effectiveness of the Viet Minh forces and to hasten their efforts to overrun and control all of Indo-China, with particular and immediate reference to shrinking the French defense zone in Tonkin. The establishment of divisional-type units will facilitate better co-ordination between adjacent units and between subordinate elements. It will enable them to concentrate their forces at points of greater vantage with minimum delay and confusion.

The improvement of radio equipment will pave the way for greater co-ordination of Viet Minh effort throughout Indo-China and will facilitate the dissemination of adverse propaganda. It will likewise enhance Viet Minh relations with Communist factions in other countries.

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